

Isaiah 9:1-2 Christmas Lights 2018 - Part 1

Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles.

2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

How many of you like Christmas house lights?

A) Style – Multi colored bulbs, icicles ?
Blinking lights

B) New projected – Space

C) I have a love hate relationship with Christmas lights –

1) I love how they look once they are up – I love coming home and night seeing them on the house

But I hate putting them up!

A) I hate how no matter how careful I am in boxing them up – I hate how they are always tangled

B) We live in a 2 story house – I hate climbing up on the roof to get to the 2nd story.

1) I hate climbing up on ladders period!

C) Every year I am reminded of the year I was helping a neighbor put up her lights –

1) Her husband was deployed – I fell off the ladder and cracked a rib – Man that hurts

D) But probably the thing that I hate the most about Christmas lights – is this:

1) One bulb can be out and it affects the whole strand.

This morning I want us to consider the strand of Christmas lights that God hung leading up to the very first Christmas!

A) God's Christmas lights come in the form of Prophecies – Predictions

B) That led up to the birth of Jesus – His son – His gift to the world – living in DARKNESS!

The OT gives us 300 prophecies of the concerning the Birth, death and Resurrection of Jesus

A) And those prophecies are like the lights in a strand of Christmas lights

B) Each one testifies to the glory and the greatness of Jesus

C) And every single one of them needed to be fulfilled in order for the strand to work.

The first Christmas light was displayed in the 3rd Chapter of the book of Genesis – after the fall.

A) God showed up in the garden with this message for Satan.

Genesis 3:15

“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman,

And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

B) Interesting prophecy considering the woman doesn't carry seed. – The man does

1) Prophecy of the Virgin Birth –

C) Isaiah followed this up Isaiah 7:14 – this will be a sign – A virgin shall conceive

Listen a young girl pregnant was not THE SIGN

A) Go into any Hospital in America – go to the maternity ward – Young women pregnant

B) That is not a sign – that is normal

C) The Sign was a virgin!

1) a woman who could be checked by a doctor and discovered to have been with a man sexually

D) Back to Genesis verse – note what happens to this child – and what he does to the serpent

Read the verse again.....

In the 3rd chapter of the Bible – God lays out the Christmas story.

A) A virgin will conceive and give birth to a child who would be bruised by the serpent – THE CROSS

B) But in dying – paying the price for the sin of Humanity – Satan would be crushed!

1)His power – Destroyed – the curse of sin that was upon man from Genesis 3 would be LIFTED!

C)That my friend was the first Christmas light!

The Next Christmas light that appeared in the form of a Prophecy came a few chapters later.

A)God called a man by the name of Abraham to leave his home in Ur of the Chaldeans.

B)Go to a land that God would show him.

C)In Genesis 22:18 we are told that through Abraham’s offspring **“all nations on earth will be blessed.”**

D)Thru **His line would come a Messiah** a Savior of the World. -

1)Through the years God renewed this promise to the children of Abraham –

E)God **impregnated** His people with a promise - then told them to wait and believe. For 2,000 yrs

And as many parents here this morning will testify, it’s tough to wait on a baby.

A)Obviously, every pregnancy is different, but the general pattern goes as follows...

B)The first trimester is full of excitement. { **A Baby**

1)The second trimester your wife begins to show and the reality settles in. { **Having a Baby!**

C)Then the third trimester is spent listening to your wife grumble a bit, and long for the day the baby finally arrives.

D)As any woman will tell you **280 days** is a long time to be **“with child”**.

But ladies, just be glad you’re not a rhinoceros.

A)Lady rhinos are pregnant for 450 days – 15 mths.

B)On average a Baby Rhino at birth weighs 70lbs

C)Or be glad you’re not an elephant. A mama elephant stays pregnant for 645 days – nearly two yrs

1)Average Baby elephant weighs 200lbs

D)So Now your **9 months and 8-10 lb baby is** looking a lot better isn’t it

But imagine the nation Israel. She was pregnant 720,000 days - nearly 2000 years.

A)That’s how long it took from the time the promise was first made to Abe to the birth of the Messiah.

B)Ladies, imagine being pregnant **for 24,000 months.**

1)My point is it’s difficult to wait on a promise.

C)Yet God told Israel she would deliver a special child... She was to wait and believe.

D)The Christmas light strand of Prophecies is a reminder to us – **that God keeps his promises!**

1)His time – His way!

The Christmas light strand got even more specific

A)Abraham had a Son – Isaac – Isaac had two sons – Jacob and Esau –

B)The Lord in his Holy Word gets specific – Line of Jacob

Numbers 24:17: **“I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel.”**

C)Now most of you know that Jacob had 12 sons who would become the 12 tribes of Israel.

1)12 Possibilities for the Messiah’s line to come from

D)God gets even more specific -

One particular tribe in that family would be singled out – the tribe of Judah

A)Genesis 49:10 **The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.**

B)Over 800 years later the Lord gives another Christmas Light – even more specific

1)Messiah – the one to save Man – the one to break the cruse – render a death blow to the serpent

C)Would come from the household of a man named Jesse from Bethlehem.

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit (Isaiah 11:1)

D) Jesse was a Shepherding – living in Bethlehem – son of Boaz and a Moabite woman – Ruth

1) Once again – Problem – Jesse had 8 sons – which one would it be - #1 Abinadab – tall good looking

E) Once again – God gets specific – Son #8 – David
1) Eight is the number of new Beginnings

Our original text – Isaiah 9

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of
Peace.....

7 Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Not only was the family line of Jesus birth predicted, but so was the location. Another light to the strand.

A) 700 years before the Birth of JESUS - the prophet Micah identified that Messiah would be born in the little town of Bethlehem.

Micah 5:2 declares that out of the city of Bethlehem, “shall come forth to Me the One to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

B) Mary and Joseph were in living Nazareth

1) In order for God to get them to Bethlehem - Caesar Augustus – prompted to take a census.

C) That is what God used to get Joseph of Nazareth to move his pregnant wife a hundred miles south to the appointed place of the birth.

D) Imagine traveling – 100 miles on the back of a donkey – 9 months pregnant –

E) As they walked down the Jordan Valley, I wonder if Joseph was muttering under his breath, “This census makes no sense. Isn’t it enough that Augustus rules the world? Why does he have to brag about the number of his subjects?”

Yet God was using something as spiritually trivial as Caesar’s inflated ego to fulfill His divine, eternal will.

Jesus was the final stanza to the song the prophets had been singing for centuries.

A) The hope of the Old Testament saints was fulfilled in Jesus.

B) When Jesus was born a long, cold night had ended - and the first rays of a new day had dawned.

1) A grim past gave way to a glorious present, and a hopeful future.

C) This is what prompted a 6th century monk, Dionysius, to split the calendar into A.D. (*anno domini*, Latin for “in the year of our Lord”) and B.C. (*before Christ*).

D) Dionysius recognized Christmas as the connection between past and present.

Now God laid out why His son was coming into the world in the first Christmas light we looked at in Genesis 3

A) To break the curse – to crush the serpent

B) And he revealed that He would be bruised in the process!

C) The Lord gets specific about that as well.

D) Predicted the type of death that Jesus would die

For dogs have surrounded Me;

The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.

They pierced My hands and My feet;

17 I can count all My bones.

They look and stare at Me.

18 They divide My garments among them,

And for My clothing they cast lots. Psalm 22:16-

18

Here is what is interesting about this statement –

A) They pierce my hands and feet – who dies that way – Kill someone – pierce their hands and feet

B) No you aim for the heart!

C) But David is writing in 12th century BC – and crucifixion would be invented in the 6th century

1) David describes a form of death – 400 yrs before it was invented.

D) And over **a thousand years before Jesus** was crucified.

E) Crucifixion – The criminal was pierced in hands and feet - Stretched – all bones visible

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

So let's tie this all together today: Here is what we learn from this – relates to Christmas

#1 Christmas connects the prophesies of the Old Testament with the realities of the New Testament

#2 Christmas Connects mankind in his need for a Savior -

A) From the first light in the strand – we see there is a problem – Man sinned – missed the mark

B) Eat you will die – But they didn't – But there was a death – RELATIONAL – no walks

C) ALL have sinned fall short – wages of sin is death

1) The soul that sins will surely die

There was a death sentence attached to humanity

A) How could it be lifted? We needed a Saviour – needed someone who could pay the price

B) We needed someone who could take our place

C) Christmas connects mankind in his need for a Savior

#3 Christmas connects God to Man

Remember the words the Angelic Choir Pronounced

Luke 2:10-14 - **Turn to Luke 2**

10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to **all people**. 11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David **a Savior, who is Christ** the Lord. – Saviour – Christ = long awaited Messiah

12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth **peace, goodwill toward men!"**

A) Jesus brought Peace – peace with God!

B) Man was **at war with God** and enemy of God – Jesus made a way for Peace!

C) Peace within – Sins forgiven - Guilt removed

D) Yours today – Receive God's gift in Jesus

Christmas is the celebration of a gift from God.

"For God so loved the world that He **gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Christmas is all about heaven breaking through - God intervening in human affairs.

A) Christmas proves that God doesn't sit in the heavens with folded arms, expecting us to work it out on our own.

B) God jumps into our muck and mire. To make a connection with Man!

C) Jesus was Born in a stinky smelly stable –

1) surrounded by the barnyard animals and their smells.

Jesus is still willing to invade the stable, of our marriages, our families, our hearts

A) To shine his light into the darkness and bring new life into a world where death has reigned